

# G L A D I A T O R S



JACK DEMPSEY

To the unphilosophical eye a prize-fight would appear a minute enough spark. But to any observer whatever must the attendant splutter attain significance. Not to broach any unnecessary social or psychological hogsheads, let us anyhow be amused by so world-compassing a show.

The fancy, embarked within an intensification of taxicabs, began by blocking all roots to the Jersey station and ferries. Indeed the tail of this huge fleet swished to and fro across the Avenue itself. Cowcatcher faces, turtle necks, and personalities which appeared to have been suckled upon port held grand sway. It was without dispute their inning.

The blond saucer with the square-cornered ring in the centre filled easily and early. The potent Tex Rickard himself, in manner quite Harvard (or was it Yale?) shone brightly; even amongst an assemblage which numbered John Ringling and Al Jolson. Our brothers and sisters, black and brown, despite the unhappy eclipse of their Great Eagle were generously sprinkled. Music, ensconced upon the horizon seats, recalled that Life, like an overfatigued hobo, was yet loping on. Perhaps it was better than an alarm-clock could have been.

The bustling and leprechaunish Descamps followed by the not extremely godlike but indubitably nice Carpentier, followed by lots of other big and little French hustlers bored a way down the main aisle. Arrived in the ring M Georges clasped hands above his head in recognition of applause; he smiled and lightened as only a French young man can. M Descamps took off his own jersey and then put it right on again. He trotted about sniffing the corners of the ring like a small intelligent wide-mouthed brown dog. He did not essay the Napoleonic.

Our Jack meanwhile had also climbed into the ring. Some felt he might have omitted the maroon sweater, but for my part I thought it sat well with the four days growth of stubble worn upon his imposing jaw. The five dollar seats roared at their hero's advent even as the fifty dollars had cried out at the imported article.